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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6478

BILL NUMBER: HB 1468

NOTE PREPARED: Nov 26, 2004

BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: Military and Overseas Voters.

FIRST AUTHOR: Rep. Reske

FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: As Introduced

FUNDS AFFECTED: X **GENERAL**
DEDICATED
FEDERAL

IMPACT: State & Local

Summary of Legislation: The bill requires the names of the nominees for President and Vice President of the United States to be certified to the Election Division not later than September 1 before the General Election. The bill requires information provided to absent uniformed services voters and overseas voters to inform the voter: (1) that the voter's attorney in fact may apply for an absentee ballot for the voter; and (2) about casting a special write-in absentee ballot. The bill provides that absentee ballots for President of the United States must be printed and delivered to the circuit court clerk at the same time as other absentee ballots. The bill requires absentee ballots from absent uniformed services voters and overseas voters to be counted if received not later than noon on the Friday after election day and if the postmark, timestamp, or other evidence demonstrates that the voter voted the ballot before the time the polls closed in the county in which the absentee ballot is to be counted. The bill requires the Election Commission to study the feasibility of receiving absentee ballots from absent uniformed services voters and overseas voters over the Internet.

Effective Date: July 1, 2005.

Explanation of State Expenditures: Under the bill, the Indiana Election Commission would be charged to study reception of absentee ballots from absent uniformed service and overseas voters via the Internet. The Commission would be required to report all findings of the proposed study by November 1, 2006. The bill does not provide an appropriation to fund the study.

The impact of this provision to state expenditures is indeterminable and would depend on how the Election Commission were to conduct the proposed study.

The funds and resources required above could be supplied through a variety of sources, including the following: (1) existing staff and resources not currently being used to capacity; (2) existing staff and resources currently being used in another program; (3) authorized, but vacant, staff positions, including those positions that would need to be reclassified; (4) funds that, otherwise, would be reverted; or (5) new appropriations. As of September 2004, the Election Division had 13 staff positions. Four positions (a systems analyst, an unclassified executive position, a Governor's fellow, and a PAT 1 attorney) were vacant. The other 9 positions included one attorney, two field auditors, two unclassified executive positions, two program coordinators, and two administrative personnel. The Election Commission/Division reverted \$63,947 to the state General Fund at the end of FY 2004. The Election Division was appropriated \$794,571 in FY 2004 and \$725,571 in FY 2005.

Ultimately, the source of funds and resources required to satisfy the requirements of this bill will depend upon legislative and administrative actions.

Explanation of State Revenues:

Explanation of Local Expenditures: Under the bill, county election boards would be required to convene, canvas, and tabulate absentee ballots of absentee uniformed and overseas voters that were received after the deadline to receive absentee ballots on election day, were received by the county election board before noon on the Friday after election day, and which exhibited evidence of being cast before the polls closed in the county. The provision may increase the administrative time required of the county election board to tabulate final election results.

Additionally, absentee ballots that have the nominees for President and Vice President printed on them would be required to be printed by the county election board one week earlier than allowed under current law. Unless vendors were to charge additionally for the speedup of printing, this provision should have a minimal impact on local expenditures.

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: Indiana Election Commission, Indiana Election Division.

Local Agencies Affected: County election boards.

Information Sources: *State of Indiana HRM Detail Staffing Report, September, 2004*; State Budget Agency: *FY2004 General and Rainy Day Fund Summaries*; State of Indiana: *List of Appropriations July 1, 2003 to June 30, 2005*; BUDSTARS.

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